

A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills with dark brown soil. On the left, there is a green tree, a purple flower, and an orange flower. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The background consists of layered, wavy blue and white bands representing the sky.

11 November
2015

Today's Agenda

What is Poetry?

- All poems are made up of a series of lines.
 - Line length, line breaks, and punctuation all contribute to rhythm and meaning.
 - Poems exist in two forms:
Traditional (Structured) and Organic (Unstructured)



Analyzing Poetry

The Art of TPCASTT and Close Reading

TPCASTT

TPCASTT is an acronym to aid in poetry analysis.

*Title
Paraphrase
Connotation
Attitude (Tone)
Shift
Title
Theme*



First, let's review some vocabulary:

- **literal** = means “exact” or “not exaggerated”.
 - Literal language is language that means exactly what is said.
 - Most of the time, we use literal language.
- **figurative** = the opposite of literal language.
 - Figurative language is language that means more than what it says on the surface.
 - Often used by poets and other writers.

Title (1)

- Before reading the poem, read the title and make a prediction about the content of the poem.
 - Will the poem be romantic? Sad? A story?



Paraphrase

“Translate” the poem into sentences.

At this point you are only interpreting the poem at a literal level. (This is Level 1 analysis.)



Connotation

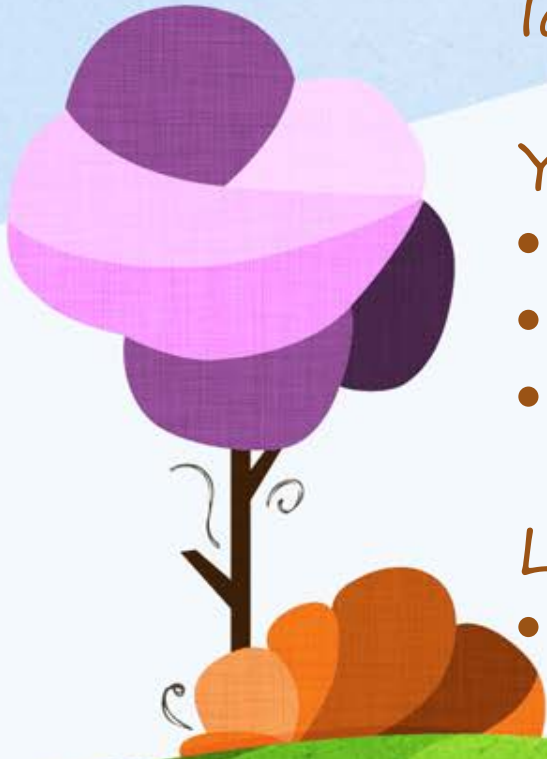
Identify the use of figurative language in the poem.

You can use DIDLS to help with this step.

- How does the poet use language?
- Is there any unusual language?
- What is the register of (how formal is) the poem?

Look for meaning in the poem beyond the literal.

- Identify sound devices and imagery as well.



Attitude (Tone)

Using your understanding of language, assess the poet's attitude toward—

- any characters.
- the subject of the poem.

Humor? Sarcasm? Awe?



Shift

Note any shifts or changes in speaker or attitude.

- *Look for key words, time changes, punctuation.*
- *Again, DIDLS will be useful.*



Title (2)

Look at the title again on an interpretive level.

- *How does the title reflect the analytical level (level 2) of the poem?*
 - *How does the poet's tone relate to the title?*
 - *How do the devices identified in the Connotation step relate to the title?*



Theme

Briefly state in your own words what the poem is about (subject), then what the poet is saying about the subject (theme).





Write the following
title and author on your
TP-CASTT handout

“Piano”
by D. H. Lawrence

Title: What *predictions* can you make about the poem from the title? What are your initial (first) thoughts about the poem? What might be the *theme* of the poem?

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The poem might be simply about a piano or playing a piano.

Is it about some memory the author has or some special feelings he has about his piano?

(now read the poem)

Piano by D. H. Lawrence

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cozy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

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It seems like the author is saddened by a childhood memory.
Maybe the theme is regret or nostalgia.

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The poet/speaker hears a woman singing, which makes him vividly recall a childhood memory.

He listened to his mother playing the piano, while sitting underneath the piano and touching her feet.

He longs to be back in the cozy, happy home of his family, when he was a child. He is overcome by emotion and cries.

Connotation: What might the poem *mean beyond the literal level*? Find examples of imagery, metaphors, similes, personification, symbolism, idioms, hyperbole, alliteration, rhyme scheme, rhythm, etc. and think about their possible connotative meanings. Consider the emotional feelings that the words may give the reader.

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The poem might mean that the author/speaker is unhappy with his current adult life. Things seemed to be quite loving and warm in his childhood.

There is a simple rhythm in the three-stanza, rhyming couplet structure, maybe related to his pleasant, more simple childhood. The piano itself is a symbol of rhythmic emotion.

Rich imagery created by use of such devices as onomatopoeia (boom, tingling, tinkling) and simile (weep like a child). The word “*appassionato*” suggests heightened emotions (passion).

“*Manhood is cast down*” suggests he is giving in to his longings for the past.

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The poet/speaker's tone seems to be one of sadness and longing, as shown by "till the heart of me weeps to belong...", "the glamour of childish days is upon me...", and "I weep like a child for the past".

"softly, in the dusk..."

"a mother who smiles as she sings..."

"betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong..."

"cast down in a flood of remembrance..."

Shift: Is there *a shift (a change)* in the tone or speaker of the poem? Where does the shift happen in the poem? What does it shift *from* and *to*?

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There is a subtle shift in tone from the beginning of the poem, which seems like a simple recollection of a childhood memory.

In the second stanza, the author/speaker uses words like “betrays” and “weeps” to indicate a desire to return to these happier times.

Then in the third stanza, words like “it is in vain”, “appassionato”, “manhood is cast down”, “flood of remembrance”, and “I weep like a child for the past” demonstrate a more painful longing to have things the way they used to be.

Title: Look at the title again.

Have your original ideas about the poem changed? How? What do you think the title means now?

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Have your original ideas about the poem changed? How? What do you think the title means now?

I think the title Piano represents a focal point for the author/speaker's feelings. Pianos and music are, by nature, connected with our emotions and often with other people in our lives. Music can prompt us to feel very deeply, and thus the piano comes to represent a much happier time in the life of the author/speaker.

Theme: What is the *overall theme* of the poem?
What insight, understanding, lesson, or truth are we supposed to have after reading this poem?

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The theme of the poem appears to be longing for the past, which may seem to have been more loving and happy.

Doing a TP-CASTT poem analysis will help you turn your observations into meaningful discussions or writing.

You have noticed the details - now can put them together so you can understand and talk about the poem much better.

